

From: [Curry, Tim](#)
To: [Hudson, Scott](#)
Cc: [Hafez, Ahmed](#); [Greg Fife](#); [Miller, Ross](#); [Langett, Eric](#)
Subject: RE: Hope y'all can get together
Date: Wednesday, April 17, 2019 7:49:00 AM

The current ITC response may still be ongoing next week but I hope not. Even if it is I will make time to meet if anyone can make it up. I am working four 10 hour days right now so if ITC has been completed I will be available Tuesday through Friday to go over the contracts administration efforts. I will discuss with anyone the activities that typically go on during the deployment of the ASPECT system but it would take much more time than is left to be effective. At best the COR may learn how to initiate a response and follow along.

There are some issues ongoing with the ARSS contractor regarding billing/invoicing right now. It seems the ARSS contractor decided they could send anyone they wanted to the ITC response and bill the government for it. When I questioned them about what these extra staff were doing and why those efforts should be charged to ITC their program manager got very angry and accused me of trying to bankrupt his company and steal his inheritance. He said I could not direct who he puts on the response. I made sure to clarify with him that I never directed him regarding who to assign to perform his contract services, only how many he was trying to do the work with. The government had not agreed to the numbers of staff he tried to assign. They were sent to the site despite the Task Order staffing plan indicating something different. This has been an ongoing point of contention during this contractors deployments for some time. He argued that they needed to send their new pilots so they could be trained. When I told him the contract says he is responsible for providing already trained pilots he indicated that they needed specific training on how to fly ASPECT missions. I reminded him the government was responsible only for initial training of the system operators, not the pilots. We have accepted poor piloting in the past knowing that they were unfamiliar with the proper way to fly the system but he has gone through so many pilots and system operators that a lot of what we had the DPDS contractor work on was the automation of the system. Sam complained that he can never get the pilots time to practice. I reminded him that using OJT for new pilots doesn't seem like the best approach but I would not direct him on how his business would meet it's trained pilot requirements. I suggested he might try getting trained pilots to start with or pay for the flights to bring them up to the expected performance level. In fact the company decided to send their newest pilots to conduct the KMCO emergency response deployment. There were significant performance issues with their ability to acquire good data. The rest of the team, EPA and the DPDS contractor, made it look as if the performance was a typical ASPECT mission but it definitely was not.

In fact the DPDS contract, with little extra effort, could extend the automation of the system so there are no operators needed in the back at all. The pilots are already ordering when the operators throw the switches to collect data. That switch could be rewired to the co-pilot station and there would be no relaying of orders to the back. The DPDS automation efforts have progressed far enough so that training operators has been greatly simplified. The operators only have to have basic computer skills and understand the switch board layout to know which ones to flip when ordered. In fact much of their effort has been simplified to the point there is definitely nothing special about their efforts. Any business that flies planes could theoretically qualify to do this work now. It would

be preferable they had some remote sensing experience but if they are setting this aside for small business then we are already agreeing to accept poor flight performance until they learn the work. The new COR needs to be aware of the differences in the two primary contract support services and the way each operates. Some of these issues are going to linger after I am gone. The new COR will have to deal with them.

If you can tell me what requirements I will need to complete for the transfer out of CMAD that will help me to manage my remaining time. I start work in the Region on the Sunday after next week. They would like to put me to work on Regional efforts as soon as I am back. You already know I'd like to burn up some leave while still on CMAD so I don't burden the Region with the hours built up due to all the extra time spent working ASPECT support. Sounded like Gina wasn't going to support that leave request.

From: Hudson, Scott
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2019 12:55 PM
To: Curry, Tim <Curry.Timothy@epa.gov>
Cc: Hafez, Ahmed <Hafez.Ahmed@epa.gov>
Subject: Hope y'all can get together

Tim:

Gina is working to get Greg Fife available for some time with you.

Ahmed is gonna pick up some COR duties as well, and we'd like you all to have a chance to get together next week. I'm uncertain when we'll know Greg's availability.

Can you two start discussing when is good to get together next week? Ahmed can travel to KC, please, once I get this approved (shouldn't be an issue). Let me know your preferences, and I'll keep you posted about Greg.

I can come as well, if that'll help. Monday-Wed is my best availability, but you guys meet when its best for you, and I'll join if I can.

A bit of a moving target without Greg's info, thus the indefiniteness at the moment.

Scott